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Degree of Master of International Studies
(International Area Studies)

**A Study on the Democratization in Myanmar:
Myanmar Model on its Transition from
Authoritarian Regime to Democratic Nation
(1988-2011)**

August 2017

Development Cooperation Policy Program
Graduate School of International Studies
Seoul National University

Hla Thida Lynn

**A Study on the Democratization in Myanmar:
Myanmar Model on its Transition from
Authoritarian Regime to Democratic Nation
(1988-2011)**

A thesis presented

by

Hla Thida Lynn

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of International Studies

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Abstract

A Study on the Democratization in Myanmar:

Myanmar Model on its Transition from Authoritarian Regime to Democratic Nation (1988-2011)

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar, formally known as Burma, has been transformed into the Democratic nation since 2011. The recent change of Myanmar political transition is the top-down elite model but there are some internal and external factors, which contributed to the political transformation of Myanmar. It seems that the transition from Authoritarian regimes to Democratization process was smoothly and peacefully. Therefore, this thesis will do analysis on the reasons of the Military Government, which made the transition in a gentle, smooth and peaceful manner. This research thesis will explain two main parts. The first part is the historical background of Myanmar Democratic transition and the second part is the analysis of the democratization process in Myanmar. The first part is that the Myanmar way of Democratization. Myanmar had ruled by the Military regimes since 1988 since then Myanmar had been isolated from the international community after the Tatmadaw Government/ Military Government took control of the State power. Due to the human rights and political situations in Myanmar, various sanctions were imposed by the United States, European Union and other Western Countries. However, the dramatic political transformation was happened in 2010 and the multiparty election was held on

May 2010 and the Union Solidarity and Development Party won the election. Later, the Tatmadaw Government transferred the State power to the elected Party on 31 March 2011. In fact, Myanmar's democratization process is a new model in the South East Asia and Asia. The Military Government had laid down and systematically implemented the Seven-Step Road Map since 2003 in order to transform the Democratic nation, and then transferred the power to the elected Party. The second part will analyze the internal and external factors to assist the democratic transition of Myanmar. It cannot be denied the fact that the transition was made by military Generals but without the encouragement of international community, the transition might take too long. Despite the sanctions from the United States and Western countries, China has acted as a good friend of Myanmar and ASEAN has also taken the persuasive role and built the constructive engagement in order to transform the democratic nation. The United States' pragmatic engagement is also effective the transition of democratization. Furthermore, the role of civil society organization and the legitimacy of democratic leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also played the important role of Myanmar democratization process. All of these factors were assisted the democratization process of Myanmar and Tatmadaw Government/ Military Government transferred the power to the elected Party. Finally, Myanmar is now on the right track to the consolidated democratic nation.

Keywords: Democratic Nation, Military regime, Seven-Step road map, Internal factors, External factors, Top-Down elite model, Pragmatic engagement

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Background

Myanmar, officially known as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, is situated in the South East Asia region and the second largest country among the Member States of Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN). Myanmar shares borders with China, India, Bangladesh, Laos, and Thailand. Myanmar is geographically situated between China and India - the most populous countries - and strategically linking the Southeast Asia and South Asia. There are one hundred thirty-five ethnic groups resided in Myanmar. The total population of Myanmar is over 51 million (2014 census report). The GDP growth rate is 8.4% in 2016 (Asia Development Bank). “Myanmar steadfastly practices an independent, active and non-aligned Foreign Policy aimed at world peace and friendly relations with nations and upholds the principles of peaceful coexistence among the nations. (Constitution, 2008)”.

Myanmar (Burma) was colonized by the British in the late 19th Century and was under the jurisdiction of British Empire until 1948. Myanmar regained her independence from the British on 4 January 1948, based on the agreement reached at Panglong in the Shan States in February 1947 between the Shan, Kachin and

Chin ethnic leaders and General Aung San¹, head of the then interim Burmese Government.

After regained the independence, the Union of Burma was established and the first President was Sao Shwe Thaik and first Prime Minister was U Nu. Unlike most of other British colonies and overseas territories, Burma did not join the British Commonwealth. After Burma regained her Independence, she practiced a Bicameral Parliament comprising of a Chamber of Deputies and a Chamber of Nationalizeds and also held the multi-party elections in 1951–1952, 1956 and 1960.

Myanmar had once pursued a democratic parliamentary system until the caretaker government took over in 1958, which led to one-party Socialist System from 1962 to 1988.

On 2 March 1962, the Tatmadaw (Military) led by General Ne Win² took control of Burma through a coup d'état and the government has been under direct or indirect control by the military since then. The Revolutionary Council, under the guidance of General Ne Win, later established the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) in June 1962 to introduce the one party system and 'Burmese Way to Socialism', which consist of Buddhism, Nationalism and Marxism ways of philosophy.

¹General Aung San (13 February 1915 – 19 July 1947) was a Myanmar Statesman, and responsible for bringing about Burma's independence from British rule, but was assassinated six months before independence. He is recognized as the leading architect of independence, and the founder of the Union of Burma. Aung San is still widely admired by the Burmese people, and his name is still invoked in Burmese politics to this day.

²General Ne Win (10 July 1910 – 5 December 2002) was a Burmese politician and military commander. He was Prime Minister of Burma from 1958 to 1960 and 1962 to 1974 and also head of state from 1962 to 1981. He founded the Burma Socialist Programme Party in 1962 and served as its Chairman until 1988. He was the military leader of Burma for 26 years.

The members of the BSPP were the military personnel but later all people could join the BSPP. From 1962 to 1974, Myanmar (Burma) was ruled by a Socialist One-party State under General Ne Win, who declared that Tatmadaw was the highest authority.

There were many root causes that led to the failure of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), which was the then ruling political party. In March 1988, the student demonstrations began and many students were killed and arrested by riot police. The weak handling of the BSPP on the student demonstrations and overall economic deterioration in the country eventually led to people's anger and distrust on the Government. Although the BSPP tried to get the people's support but it was failed. Even though the BSPP Chairman U Ne Win suggested the party members to hold the national referendum to introduce the multi-party system in Myanmar, most of the delegates disagreed at the Party Congress. At the same time, the leadership of the Party changed and U Sein Lwin, a retired brigadier general, became the Party Chairman and President of the Myanmar. The shuffle of leadership further frustrated the people with the government. In late July 1988, the demonstrations occurred in Yangon again. The Government announced the martial law and ordered the military to shoot the demonstrators. The BSPP and the Government held the Congress and council meeting and appointed Dr. Maung Maung as a new President and Chairman of the BSPP to replace U Sein Lwin. But the situation became even worse that the country was on the verge of total collapse. At this situation, the Tatmadaw (Military) took over the power to restore to peace and stability in the country and declared the formation of

the State Law and Order Restoration Council³. It later transformed into the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)⁴.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council declared to hold the multi-party general election. At the election held in 1990, the National League for Democracy (NLD), under the patronage of Daw Aung San Su Kyi, a Noble Peace Laureate and the daughter of General Aung San who was independence hero of Myanmar, won a landslide victory. However, the SPDC did not transfer the State power to the NLD. The reason was that the country was not ready yet to transfer to the civilian government and needed to prepare the State Constitution. Since that time, Myanmar was isolated and became one of the dictatorship countries in the South East Asia and Asia. Due to the human rights violation and suppressive policies, the United States, Western Countries, and International organizations, including the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), imposed the punitive sanctions on Myanmar. Under the Military Government, the economic development of Myanmar was very low even though the then Government introduced and practiced the market-oriented economic policy. In 1992, the SPDC started to draw the State Constitution and then hold the National Convention in 1993.

Through referendum, the new Constitution of Myanmar was adopted in May 2008. According to the new Constitution, free and fair General Election was

³ From 1988 to 1997, the SPDC was known as State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which had replaced the role of Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP).

⁴ was the official name of the military regime of Burma (also known as Myanmar), which seized power in 1988. In 1997, SLORC was abolished and reconstituted as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The powerful regional military commanders, who were members of SLORC, were promoted to new positions and transferred to the capital of Yangon.

held in 2010. The Union Solidarity and Development Party won the election. After decades of Military Government, for the first time, the new Constitution paved the way for a transfer of administrative authority from the military Government to the elected civilian Government. This unprecedented transformation enunciates the principles of democracy, good governance, rule of law and fundamental human rights.

On 1 April 2011, a new Government led by President U Thein Sein transferred the power from the State Peace and Development Council which was the military-led Government. From 2011- 2015, U Thein Sein's Government made the tremendous changes in Myanmar. The Government introduced the political, economic, administrative and private sector reform measures and paved the way towards a democratic society.

In November 2015, the free and fair General Election was held in a peaceful and transparent manner. The National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, won at this General Election. The new Government led by Daw Aung San Su Kyi transferred the State power from U Thein Sein's Government on 30th March 2016.

1.2. Research question

Based on the aforesaid situation, I would like to do research in our country political transition as follows:

Why did the Myanmar Tatmadaw Government make the transition from the military dictatorship?

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definition of Democracy and Democracy changes

The word ‘democracy’ came into English literature in the sixteenth century. The concept was started earlier from BC 638 when Greeks articulated that ‘democracy was not to follow what the master said, just to keep the rule of law’.⁵ There are some democratic concepts in Myanmar’s Buddhism. For example, equal rights, peaceful living, humane attitudes, and most importantly, ethics are defined in Buddhist teachings in Myanmar.⁶ Different political cultures and norms may interpret various meanings in defining the word ‘democracy’. At the same time, there are only a few people who know democracy correctly either from the youngest democracy or the oldest one.⁷

Democracy, to be simply defined, is a State in which all fully eligible citizens vote at regular intervals to choose, from among alternative candidates, the people who will be in charge of setting the State’s policies.⁸ In the view of Western

⁵ A Lawyer: *Political Sociology*, Yangon, Shay Yet Sarpe , 2012, p. 72

⁶ Dr. AshinDhammapia, (Prof.): *Democracy and Buddhism*, Yangon, Mya Kyar Ngone, 2012, pp.16-34

⁷ Thakin Ba Thoung: *Defining Democracy*, Yangon, Democracy Saroak Company, 1954, Introduction. No page number.

⁸ W. Phillips Shively: *Power and Choice: An Introduction to Political Science*, 10th ed.,

New York, McGraw-Hill, 2007, p. 176.

(Hereafter this work will be referred to as Shively: *Power and Choice*, 10thed.)

scholars, "liberal democracy" is understood as a political system which works not only by free and fair elections but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property.⁹ It guarantees liberal norms such as social, political, economic, and religious rights. At the same time, it has designs to limit government power over society and individuals.¹⁰

In addition, there are certain principles that are laid down in the word 'democracy'. Democracy allows every individual to speak, criticize and disagree with others freely. But, it is based on the principles of tolerance. Liberty and equality are the foundations of democracy. A democratic government does not impose illegitimate coercion in the name of humanitarian. It is carried on according to the Constitution. The policy of government should be made by the public opinion. Democracy is based not on the bullet but on the ballot.¹¹ As discussed above is like a top of the ice berg, there may have a larger volume of principles when one make studies in details.

A great writer who used to stay in Kathar Township during British annexation in Myanmar, George Orwell also said: -

In the case of a word like democracy not only is there no agreed definition but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides...The defenders of any kind of regime claim that it is a democracy and fear

⁹ Fareed Zakaria: *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, London, W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, p. 17.

(Hereafter this work will be referred to as Zakaria: *The Future of Freedom*)

¹⁰ Ardeth Maung Thawngmung: "Preconditions and Prospects for Democratic Transition in Burma/Myanmar," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XLIII, no. 3, May/June 2003, p. 444 (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Thawngmung: "*Preconditions and Prospects*")

¹¹ V.D. Mahajan: *Political Theory (Principles of Political Science)*, Fourth Edition, New Delhi, S. Chand & Company Ltd., 1999, p. 796.

(Hereafter this work will be referred to as Mahajan: *Political Theory*)

that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning.¹²

Whatever there are differences, the will of people have been embedded as the common understanding of its definition. In the modern approach, Professor Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl wrote as follows: -

Modern political democracy is a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives.¹³

Both Professors have also pointed out that “all good things do not necessarily go together.” It means that it has demerits if one study democracy. For example, efficient administrative or economies in democratic form of government are better than non-democratic states. Particularly, people in transition period have such expectations as the way they classically understand to democracy.

According to Scholar Sartori, there are four major forms or types of democracy. The first one is *social democracy*, which is neither capitalist nor socialist. The second one, as Karl Marx put, is *economic democracy* where economy determines factor of politics. The third one is *industrial democracy*, which is the management of industry by workers on self-governing lines. The fourth one is *people's democracy*, commonly practiced Communist states.¹⁴

¹² Ibid., p.793

¹³ Philippe C. Schmitter& Terry Lynn Karl: “What Democracy Is...and Is Not”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, no. 3, Summer 1992, p. 77.

(Hereafter this work will be referred to as Schmitter: “What Democracy Is...and Is Not”)

¹⁴ (a) Mahajan: *Political Theory*, p.796

More classically, democracy has been defined into two kinds—*direct democracy* and *indirect democracy*. All the people gather at one place and decide the matters concern is called *direct democracy*. Modern states, however, mainly practice *indirect democracy* on account of their larger size. Today, Switzerland has practiced *direct democracy* in which people meet in the Landsgemeinde (Cantonal Assembly) and elect Cantonal Officers and adopt legislation. People who are not considered as citizens are a demerit of indirect democracy.¹⁵

To learn from another Myanmar scholar, Professor U Maung Maung Gyi said in his *Burmese Political Values* published in 1983: -

Democracy is not confined to administrative mechanism, it is not merely an institutional set up, nor does it mean a document of rights and privileges, it is more than that. It is a 'way of life', encompassing all aspects of human life, political economic, social, and cultural. Viewed in one aspect it is a 'state of mind' or 'habit of mind'. I wish therefore to say that it is 'with the people', that is, with every one of us. Each and every one of us should be a 'democrat,' that is, a person who believes in the fundamental democratic values and puts them into practice, in order to make our Democracy a viable political entity. Democratic formulae such as the spirit of compromise, assertion, promotion, and protection of individual rights such as rights of liberty, justice, and privacy, upholding the dignity of man, respect for law, need for opposition and tolerance of the same, decision of issues by majority vote and the acceptance of the decision by all, protection of minority rights, and others need to be worked out in practice by the people, that is, by everyone of us.

(b) Before USSR joined the Second World War, the war is called Imperialist War. After Russians involved that war, it started to be called People's War. Likewise, the word *people* are widely used by left leaning groups from 'war' to 'democracy'.

¹⁵ Ibid. p.797

Myanmar has practiced “democracy” since its independence. At least, it was on trial period, as Professor U Maung Maung Gyi argued. There is always a debate about democracy. It is not surprise to see such debate. If one looks back in the history of newly independent Myanmar, there is also a debate whether independence is true or not. As left leaning groups argued, there were debates for independence. No one has such arguments after more than sixty years. To apply this into another sense, hopefully, democracies will no longer be an ideological word or a debatable one for the Union of the Republic of Myanmar which is established according to the 2008 Constitution. Normally, people have enjoyed talking whether Myanmar democracy is true or not.

2.3 Definition of Democratization

Democracy and democratization look similar subjects. However, study to democratization is a new subject. Democracy movements are seen in the democratization although it is different in scholarly approach when one starts to learn democratization. In democracy study, for example, by judging the election, it may easy to observe whether there is democracy. However, in democratization study, for example, it is necessary to look at in the hearts of people and their culture which have been nurtured by several years.¹⁶ But, to get the democracy, it needs democratization in

¹⁶ Kyaw Win: *Case Study of Myanma Politics(1948-1988)*, Plastic Rainbow book Publication, July 2012, Yangon, p. 6-7. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Kyaw Win: *Case Study of Myanma Politics*.)

which all young and old people enjoy along with their norms and values powered by the political institutions. To get the goal, it takes time to nurture the political culture.¹⁷

As scholars frequently mention, democratization comes from top side, down-side or ‘import.’ Scholars may commonly agree that there is democratization when societies have been changed from non-democratic [including semi-democratic] state to democratic state [including electoral democracy].¹⁸ At least, democratization requires “open contestation over the right to win the control of the government, and this in turn requires free competitive elections, the results of which determine who governs.”¹⁹

There are some scholars who tell the simple steps of democratization. As a first step, democracy should be introduced into a non-democratic regime²⁰. Second, democratic qualities should be deeply rooted in the given democracies. Last, its democracy should be growing in a sustainable way.²¹ Scholars argue that if these three parts are harmonically integrated in a given society, it can be called there is democratization. It looks clear to understand democratization according to the said definition.

¹⁷Salai Hlyan Hmone: *Principles of Democracy*, Yangon, BCES, 2003, p. 114

¹⁸ This concept is widely used in this work.

¹⁹ Linz: “*Democracy and Its Arenas*,” p. 1

²⁰ Non-democratic regime is a broadly defined word. Some of them fall into semi-authoritarian states which are during the democratization.

²¹ChritianWelzel: “Theories of Democratization”, *World Value Survey*, 20 October, 2008 74-75. www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs/articles/folder.../OUP_Ch06.pdf - p. 80 (accessed 13 March, 2013) (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Welzel: “Theories of Democratization”.)

Professor Samuel Huntington, however, argues that there is no intellectual definition that fits the contemporary political regimes. The definition of democratization and its steps of democratization are not the exceptional one. It cannot be explained as a clear-cut one. Moreover, understanding of “problem” of democratization itself is changing over 50 years. This changing is a result of different arguments showing internal and external conditions that enable and limit the spread of democracy.²²

As Professor Huntington has named it is a “common sense” definition of democracy, not just because it is mostly used but because different observers are likely to evaluate on a set of procedures as democratic or not. It seems it does not concern with the outcomes of democratic procedures. It does not judge whether the operations that makes outcomes are “good”, “fair”, or “just”. It is possibly neglecting whether the system is democratic or not. Therefore, elections alone may represent democratic in a procedural democracy sense. But it does not taking consideration of social or economic factors that plays important role of understanding democracy.²³ And, these kinds of questions have been studied as another trend in the democratization studies and democracy theory.²⁴

As Philippe Schmitter has said, it includes constructing ‘partial regimes’---all big organizations that make up the characteristic infrastructure of

²² James E. Bell & Lynn A. Staeheli: “Discourses of Diffusion and Democratization”, *Political Geography*, 20 (2001), 176 www.elsevier.com/locate/polgeo (accessed March 23, 2013) (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Bell : “Discourses of Diffusion and Democratization”.)

²³ Bell: “*Discourses of Diffusion and Democratization*”, p. 20

²⁴ Croissant : “*Introduction: Democratization*,” p. 1

modern liberal democracies. To achieve it as a general way, it should have capacity not to break down or erosion established democracy. And, it should have clear tasks for completing, deepening and organizing that democracy.²⁵

Basically, this is a practical question that why state/societies are going to be democratized. And, it is also necessary to discuss when and how democratization happens in countries. However, there is no universal truth theory to explain why such things happened in the different places of world.

At the same time, there is no clear agreement about ‘driving forces’ or ‘causes’²⁶ which initiate democratization. Or there is no single and an absolute factor which brings democratization. One factor may fit in one state, but not to the other state or to other society. For example, colonial legacies and religious traditions are some of the proved factors why societies were democratized. It may be partially true to the cases of some European origins. Protestant religion and British descent can explain why those societies favor democracy to a certain extent. Ironically, it is surprise to learn that monarchies still survive in the oldest democracies in this same place, Europe. The UK, the Netherlands, and Scandinavian countries are good examples of the constitutional monarchies, although democratic freedom in such countries is highly

²⁵ Andreas Schedler: “What is Democratic Consolidation,” in Larry Diamonds, ed. et al, *Debates on Democratization*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010, pp. 59-60, 68. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Schedler, “What is Democratic Consolidation.”)

²⁶ Causes are generally defined in Wikipedia as a quick reference , www.wikipedia.org/democratization (accessed 12 September 2016.)

guaranteed.²⁷ Therefore, there are no clear-cut factors to explain about its root causes of democratization.

As of 2012, more than one hundred states practices “democracy.” Triple winner for Pulitzer Prize and Journalist Thomas L. Friedman said “every corner of the world is witnessing the turning point of power shift: hierarchies are no longer strong, closed systems are opening up, and voices from the people are coming as a source of political, economic and social change.” As he put, “[we] have been saying goodbye to top-down, iron-fisted monarchies and autocracies, which have been challenged by massively urbanized, technologically empowered citizens.”²⁸ Democracy is, in fact, being practiced from government to a daily life.²⁹

2.3. Concept of Democracy in Myanmar

As stated earlier in the brief history of democratization in Southeast Asia and the world, there are many different factors for learning democracy. Different concepts and practices can be observed. Before it is going to study democratization in the modern period of Myanmar in the next chapter, it is worthwhile to check whether Myanmar has suitable conditions for democracy.

Regarding with its indigenous versions of democracy, there are several arguments that show how Myanmar Buddhism and political culture are embedded for

²⁷Welzel: “*Theories of Democratization*”, pp. 74-75 / 80

²⁸ Thomas L. Friedman, “The World According to Maxwell Smart, Part I,” *International New York Times*, July 12, 2014. www.nytimes.com/2014/07/13/opinion/sunday (accessed on 15 September 2016) (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Friedman: “The World According to Maxwell Smart, Part I”)

²⁹Zakaria: *The Future of Freedom*, p. 13

democracy. Democratic icon in Myanmar, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, argued that “[democracy], checks and balances and human rights are compatible with Buddhism as well as with Burmese traditions...”³⁰ It seemed that democracy is not a foreign subject to Myanmar as she argued.

In Myanmar’s tradition, there are arguments that the people are entitled to a caring ruler which is different from what Daw Aung San Suu Kyi argued. Thus, it is interesting to learn and compare with other scholarly views with regard to Myanmar’s democratization in terms of its political culture and political tradition. Moreover, Myanmar, as an old nation, has significantly practiced its own tradition of political concepts and practices which are, however, needed to verify whether they still exist in this globalization age. Myanmar again is a unique State and different from other Southeast Asia States in terms of its socio-political values.

Before it imply political culture in Myanmar politics, it is necessary to have a picture of Myanmar history as a brief. Historians had assumed that Myanmar’s nation building began around eleventh century. Throughout its history, it used to have Bamar hegemony over other indigenous minorities. At least three times in history, Bamar Kings had unified the whole territory of what is nowadays known as Myanmar. In fact, in the mid sixteenth century, Myanmar Kingdom was established by King Bayintnaung, always referred to him as founder of Kingdom of Hanthawaddy , spread its glory and authority almost all over mainland Southeast Asia. In the early nineteenth

³⁰Stephan Engelkamp: *Moral Authority in Burmese Politics*, ASIEN 109, October 2008, pp. 50-51. Perhaps Aung San Suu Kyi is devoted Buddhist and made such statements. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Engelkamp: *Moral Authority in Burmese Politics*)

century, Myanmar created the Konebaung Dynasty , which exercised suzerainty over large part of Southeast Asia. However, after losing three successive wars to the British in 1824, 1852 and 1885, Myanmar became a British colony.

It was evident by many historians that there were significant factors supporting political culture in Myanmar's absolute monarchy. The first one is about central position of Kingship. As it is noted, it is different from European experiences. In the West, there are three kinds of power center, namely King, local Feudal Landlord and Church. Unlike the West system, Eastern Emperors, including Myanmar Kings, have long arms for his executive power. Nearly all heads of villagers or townships have been directly and indirectly appointed by Kings. At the same time, there are no strong institutions which could interfere or oppose against the desire of King. It is different from Western cases where there are highly likely to check their Kings by other institutions such as Churches.

In addition, there is another thing different from European experience in terms of monarchy. It is social structure. In Europe, there is a middle class. It can be said rising bourgeoisie caused the France Revolution.³¹ Because of this revolution led by this middle class, Europeans (the world) had entered new age of politics.

On the one hand, the experience of Myanmar history shows there is weak middle class. Myanmar farmers never had the chances to have a revolution. It is the same in the class of traders of Myanmar. They never became as a change for the whole society. Or it can be said that there is no third kind of social structure between

³¹ French Revolution , en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution (accessed on 7 September 2016)

King and his associates, and the ruled such as farmers. It is valid that the middle class is still weak in this modern state. Without checks and balances, Myanmar Kings as well as leaders of modern state have been ruling strong state Myanmar.³²

In the context of studying moral authority in Myanmar politics, one needs to distinguish legitimate authority from the idea of democratic accountability. Because it is widely assumed that the idea comes from the Western concept of popular sovereignty. In Buddhist philosophy, however, the ultimate goal is to escape from the cycle of birth and rebirth; in this point, the desire for power, prestige, and achieving other material things is unbearable. So, government in the Buddhist concept is one of the five evils all men must endure. Man, therefore, live in a political order he could not change. His responsibilities never extend to politics.³³ Upon this concept, legitimate authority of government or Kingship is linked to Buddhist concept which, in turn, put constraints of democratic accountability, a foundation of democracy and democratization as mentioned by the Western political thinkers.

Almost all philosophy is discussed above to the nature and ethical conducts of leaders are still reflecting in modern Myanmar. The assumption on nature and ethical conduct of General Aung San once has been regarded as supernatural phenomena which are now attributed to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. This is because people saw her as a guarantor of democracy. To correct the taboo of what Myanmar people mythically hope for her, she frankly said her followers that not to: -

³²Kyaw Win: *Case Study of Myanmar Politics*, pp. 6-12.

³³Engelkamp: *Moral Authority in Burmese Politics*, p. 50.

“...think that I will be able to give you democracy. I will tell you frankly, I am not a magician. I do not possess any special power that will allow me to bring you democracy. I can say frankly that democracy will be achieved only by you, by all of you.”³⁴

It is true that the successive Myanmar [military] leaders have used to say that “the army is father, the army is mother.”³⁵ However, after 2010 elections, Myanmar and Defense Force (Tatmadaw) was frequently mentioned that State is the foster parent of the people and Tatmadaw was born by the public as People’s Tatmadaw. Perhaps, this philosophy is a reflection of what Myanmar people have their own image for their leaders. The way Myanmar people traditionally treat to their leader is like a God, as it is stated. ‘Old habit dies hard’ is relatively accepted in Myanmar community.

³⁴GustaafHoutman: “Sacralizing or Demonizing Democracy? Aung San Suu Kyi’s “Personality Cult,” in Monique Skidmore, ed. , *Burma at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2005, pp. 134/147 . It needs to compare with what Aung San Suu Kyi said in p. 33 regards with the Buddhism and Democracy. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Houtman: “Sacralizing or Demonizing Democracy”) .

³⁵(a) Young Pascal KhooThwe had struggle for his life hiding in jungle while Tatmadaw assured to protect all citizens of Myanmar like their father and mother.

(b) Pascal KhooThwe: *From the Land of Green Ghost: A Burmese Odyssey*, UK, HarperCollins, 2002, p. 177

CHAPTER III

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Hypothesis and Methodology

Myanmar's democratic transition is the new model in the Southeast Asia and Asia and it can be called "Myanmar Model". Myanmar has changed the democratic nation peacefully even though the country's economy was stagnant. Myanmar is now at the dawn of democracy and moves on to the successful democratic imperative that Myanmar economy is now growing with the support of the international community and its development assistance. Based on the research question, this thesis will explore how Myanmar changed the democratization process and what kind of factors are supporting the Myanmar democratization process.

Myanmar had stayed in the isolation world because of her political system. There are many things to transform the democratization of Myanmar. Myanmar was ruled by Military government after uprising of 1988. Since then, economy and social life of people of Myanmar were in very low situation. Though Myanmar way of democratization is the top –down elite model; there are many factors affect to Myanmar democratization process. Due to the human rights violation and other situation of Myanmar, sanctions were imposed on Myanmar by the United States and Western Countries. Myanmar Tatmadaw Government faced tough situation but they were still held the power in their hands. However, the soft power approach from

major power countries like China, the United States and the encouragement and persuasion from the regional organization like ASEAN, the Tatmadaw Government started to change the transition process and transferred the power to the civilian government peacefully. The legitimacy of politician, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is in the heart of people of Myanmar, played the important role in the Myanmar democratization. The Tatmadaw leader is also played the important role as well.

Based on the research question, the research methodology will be descriptive and qualitative analysis. Myanmar democratization process is the top-down elite model so that the analysis will be through the scholar theory, academic analysis, journals and books. There will also do the research from the official news and Myanmar Leaders' speech.

CHAPTER IV

The Historical Background of Myanmar Democratization

4.1. Myanmar Way of Democratization

Opening chapter for Myanmar way to democratization after 2010 was started by military coup in 1988 uprising. The Seven-Step Roadmap, which has been played a major role in Myanmar democratization, was initiated by former Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt who had served as Secretary (1) of State Law and Order Restoration Council. He has frequently stated that Seven-Step Roadmap should be the most unforgettable efforts by previous governments. However, he has also been refusing to admit about 1988 military coup. As he said, it was Tatmadaw who took political power just for the state development.³⁶

It is interesting to learn about 1988 uprising and military coup. Perhaps, former Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt may have been right when one observes the Tatmadaw situations. Just before the coup day, stated by former Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt, there was a briefing meeting at U Ne Win's residence office.³⁷ General Saw Maung had been late even for that emergency meeting. General Saw Maung later came into the room with casual dress.³⁸ General Saw Maung at first refused to take state power, and complained that he did not know how to do for

³⁶ Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, Second Printing, Yangon, Quality Publishing House, 2014, pp. 106-225 (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Myat Khine: *Interview with U KhinNyunt*)

³⁷ (a) Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, pp. 106-225

(b) U Khin Nyunt: *My Life*, pp. 61-70

³⁸ Ko Than: *Experiences of Change*, p. 53

administration.³⁹ Former Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt also said that it was not the coup. It was supervised and arranged by U Ne Win. He even noted down what Dr. Maung Maung said for the announcement of Tatmadaw which was later broadcasted in media.⁴⁰

After 1988 uprising and its coup, Tatmadaw formed the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in September 1988. It was a Council and not the government: SLORC later explained and declared. It was for temporary purpose and just saving the country from anarchism.⁴¹ And, it ruled the country by decree. Opposition groups led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who had lived most of her life overseas, the only daughter of General Aung San, established the National League for Democracy (NLD) in the late 1988. In 1990, the SLORC held elections according to the SLORC Order No. (1/88),⁴² in which the NLD won eighty per cent of the constituencies. However, the SLORC did not allow to sermon parliament and instead, towards the end of 1992, convened a National Convention with its handpicked delegates to draw up a new Constitution. After sixteen years, in 2008, the National Convention finally completed a Constitution which was endorsed through national referendum on 4 May 2008 when the country was torn down by Cyclone Nargis.

³⁹(a) Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, pp. 106-225

(b) U Khin Nyunt: *My Life*, pp. 61-70

⁴⁰Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, pp. 106-225.

⁴¹*Chronicle of State Law and Order Restoration Council 1988-1991*, Publishing Committee of State Law and Order Restoration Council, 1991, p.25 (Hereafter this work will be referred to as *Chronicle of State Law and Order Restoration Council 1988-1991*)

⁴²*Chronicle of State Law and Order Restoration Council 1988-1991*, p. 507

Since early 1990s, political deadlock remained in Myanmar, where SLORC and NLD in Myanmar politics appeared to pursue uncompromising trend. In 2008, SLORC renamed as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and announced its decision to hold a nation-wide general election in 2010 for smooth transition of power from the military rule to a constitutional government. SPDC issued the SPDC Union Election Commission Law No. (1/2010) for multi-party democracy general elections and, it also revoked SLORC Order No. (1/88).⁴³ According to the SPDC Law No. 2/2010, the Political Party Registration Law, it was announced that eligible party could be applied for elections that are “loyal and faithful” and “accept and exercise genuine and well-disciplined multi-party democracy system.”⁴⁴

SLORC/SPDC had started talking about democracy since it came into power. In fact the multi-party was openly offered by U Ne Win when his party was facing struggle in 1988 democracy uprising. Dr Maung Maung, former President, also offered to restore the Students’ Union Hall when public frustration was high in 1988. In addition, he revoked martial law one time. However, it could not convince the public who frustrated the government. Moreover, the opposition could not make a compromise like oppositions from Eastern European countries which brought ‘imposed’ transition by cooperation with their governments.⁴⁵ While democratization in such

⁴³ The State Peace and Development of Myanmar Law No. 1/2010, *The Union Election Commission Law*, The Union of Myanmar, The State Peace and Development of Myanmar, 8 March 2010, p. 10

⁴⁴The State Peace and Development of Myanmar Law No. 2/2010, *The Political Parties Registration Law*, The Union of Myanmar, The State Peace and Development of Myanmar, 8 March 2010, p. 2

⁴⁵Kyaw Win: *Hindsight* , pp. 260-270

countries had thus improved in a certain degree, Myanmar remained unchanged and even reversed to military dictatorships.

After Tatmadaw ordered Notification Order (1/88), General Saw Maung announced to hold general elections to be fair and equal as much as possible. He also said that 'their rule of the country was just before elections. After elections, Tatmadaw get back to barracks'. That is why; the Tatmadaw formed the SLORC for state's administration instead of government.⁴⁶ Why the country was ruled by SLORC was explained. First of all, people had been difficult for their living and had faced burden of demonetization. Second point was the failure of BSPP in Myanmar national plans and policy. And, it saw that leaders of party and BSPP did not represent the public desire. It also said that Tatmadaw had concerned the open letters sent by former Brigadier Aung Gyi. Myanmar case was not special. If other country will face similar situation such as anarchism, there would be military intervention. If one understands this, military coup (Military Rule) is no exception. It also claimed that Tatmadaw did not want to keep power. That is why it ruled the country by the council.

On 12 September 1988, General Saw Maung said that all soldiers should keep the rules and regulations set by Pyidaungsu Election Commission. He also said that soldiers had to respect not only the order of army, but also the civil law. Then, he announced later that all government staffs were no longer BSPP party members. All staffs should be free from any party which was issued as Order No. (14/88).⁴⁷

⁴⁶*Chronicle of State Law and Order Restoration Council 1988-1991*, pp. 483-500

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 483-500

When 1990 elections were held, NLD won the landslide victory. It had shocked to the Tatmadaw. It was also true that 1990 elections was the fair election too.⁴⁸ Later, Tatmadaw had arrested Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the grounds that she and NLD had caused instability of the country.

If one looks at Secretary (I) General Khin Nyunt speeches, he had also refused to transfer power to the winner of 1990 elections. On 27 July 1990, the SLORC issued the announcement that those who had been elected in the 1990 general elections were representatives for future democratic state of Myanmar which need a constitution as a first step. SLORC also declined to accept the draft of the constitution proposed by NLD announced at Gandhi Hall. Then General Khin Nyunt did not mention the specific time frame for the future Myanmar. He said in a press conference that there was no time frame in drafting constitutions.⁴⁹ After three years, SLORC had announced to hold convention. But it was boycotted by NLD. NLD had kept saying that power transfer to the election-winning party should be the only option. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD were so frustrated by the announcement of SLORC in drawing constitution. But the convention was carried on by parties and representatives who were close to SLORC/SPDC. To call for the convention, SLORC announced Notification No (1/1993) as an Amnesty Order in 1993.⁵⁰ It also ordered amnesty in 1997 when SLORC was changed into State Peace and Development Council.⁵¹ It also

⁴⁸ Than Win Hlaing : *Research on Elections held in Myanmar*, p. 96

⁴⁹ Than Win Hlaing, *U Khin Nyunt or Champion of Torture*, Yangon, LwinOo, 2014, p.183

⁵⁰ San Lwin ,*Amnesty Issued in Myanmar*, Yangon , U San LwinSarPe, 2013, p. 38.

⁵¹ Ibid.

ordered (5/1996) that people should not say criticism about the convention.⁵² The convention had been closed from 1996. Moreover, NLD-led democracy groups had boycotted the convention. UN and ASEAN had also criticized the convention since it failed for equal representatives.

Scholar have named that the move from socialism to democracy was a change in the regime, not the regime change. It was a transplant not a replacement. It was very similar when people talk about former USSR politics. When it announced perestroika and glasnost in the former USSR, it had been criticized by many reform-minded people. There was no change at last. As Dr Maung Maung said, a shop used to sell “Socialist Pilau Rice” now started selling “Democracy Pilau Rice.”⁵³ It means the real essence of democratization and freedom was skillfully managed just to woo the public.

The Seven-Step Roadmap, which was announced on 30 August 2003, was directly related to the case of Debayin incident on 30 May 2003. In the incident, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi led NLD had been blocked by unknown local people. This news shocked the whole world, and SLORC received the bad reputation. After a short period, General Khin Nyunt had announced this Seven-Step Roadmap. Perhaps, that was saving Tatmadaw face. In fact, the idea of road map was introduced from foreign visitors including Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew. Whenever Secretary (1)

⁵² Dr. Yan Myo Thein: *Constitutional Crisis, 2015 Elections and Politics*, Yangon, Anargat Karla Sarpe Setsanyae, 2013, p-135. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Yang Myo Thein : *Constitutional Crisis*)

⁵³ Dr. Maung Maung: *The 1988 Uprising in Myanmar*, p. 82

General Khin Nyunt suggested it, Senior General Than Shwe had ignored it.⁵⁴ At last, it was permitted when it came the right time. It may be assumed how Senior General Than Shwe was smart enough to choose the right time. The announcement stated that National Convention would be restarted as a first step. General Khin Nyunt wanted to see smooth process of road maps including successful convention. He had pushed to make constitution according to road map. He believed that Myanmar needed constitution which should be different from 1947 and 1974. The weakness such as the right of secession stated in 1947 and the socialist economy and single party rule of 1974 were not suitable for future multi-party democracy of Myanmar.⁵⁵ Dr. Yan Myo Thein remarked that the Seven-Step Roadmap announcement had been only a political plan.⁵⁶

In addition, another plot was 2008 Constitution which also happened just after 2007 Saffron Revolution. There may be coincidence. But, such a move likely happened only after SPDC had been pressured from international community. Perhaps, this was masterminded by Senior General Than Shwe who did not want the same fate what U Ne Win faced.⁵⁷

⁵⁴U Khin Nyunt: *My Life*, pp. 465-466

⁵⁵Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, p. 151.

⁵⁶Dr. Yan Myo Thein: *Post 2015 NLD Party and President*, Yangon, Sar Na Di Publishing, 2013, pp. 126-127. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Yan Myo Thein : Post 2015 NLD Party)

⁵⁷(a) Kyaw Win: *The Thaw on Myanmar Politics*, p. 317.

(b) Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, p. 74.

(U Khin Nyunt sadly said about U Ne Win's poor fate and his funeral. He said it was because of his poor management.)

Senior General Than Shwe had a rare interview. One of his first interviews was conducted by *Leadership* magazine. He said that “the Roadmap was delayed not because of Tatmadaw but because of the busy efforts of the SLORC/SPDC in nation building. If there is cooperation from international, it would be smooth. It should be aided by international donor.”⁵⁸

Later, General Soe Win served shortly for the Prime Minister on 19 October 2004 after General Khin Nyunt was under house arrest unexpectedly.⁵⁹ It was the shocked news that General Thura Shwe Mann and General Soe Win had reconfirmed the national convention. Since people had worry for the national convention and democratization, General Thura Shwe Mann explained, “[it] [removal of General Khin Nyunt] was not about people matter for the Seven-Step Roadmap. Tatmadaw was ready to serve for the country. It had strong human resources.” Therefore, Vice Senior General Soe Win was replaced who will commit to accomplish the Seven Step Roadmap.⁶⁰ General Thein Sein, the then Chairman of National Convention also announced and reconfirmed on 22 October 2004 that principle was principle, they did not change the Seven-Step Roadmap. He also highlighted resignation [removal of General Khin Nyunt] did not matter.⁶¹

General Soe Win also said in his book that SPDC administration did not successfully carry out their missions regarding with administration since there was

⁵⁸ Than Win Hlaing: *U Than Shwe or Nay Pyi Taw Prince*, Yangon, LwinOoSarPe, 2014, p.141

⁵⁹ Myint Thu: *Autobiography of General Soe Win*, p. 398

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 399

⁶¹ Myat Khine: *Interview with U Khin Nyunt*, p. 284

variety of barriers. Especially young soldiers could not manage very well. They used to run Tatmadaw by the chains of order. It was like top-down administration. It was difficult when they had been assigned for civil rule. The civil rules eventually had been impacted by that military style top-down system. Moreover, some military personnel could not avoid corruptions when they got power.⁶² Similar remarks were made by General Ne Win. U Ne Win also said that “it was not easy to control their selves when soldiers got rich. It was so easy for no matter how it was difficult and struggle for their lives.”⁶³

It means military institutionalization is difficult to fit in civil administration and community life. Besides, it was true that different units of armies had freedom and independence in terms of doing business. While they were looking incomes for the sake of their units, each and every leader unintentionally abused their power under Tatmadaw led governments.⁶⁴ Myanmar situation became the worst when General Khin Nyunt led Special Military Intelligence, which had involved in huge illegal business by dictatorial power.⁶⁵

At the same time, people were still continuing the social movements even though it was crack down by SLORC/SPDC. In fact, it was not unusual for SLORC/SPDC which came into power by cracked down on the 1988 uprising of Myanmar. To counter the social movement organizations, the SPDC created new

⁶² (a) Myint Thu: *Autobiography of General Soe Win*, p. 526

(b) U Khin Nyunt: *My Life*, p. 530

⁶³ Dr. Maung Maung: *Myanmar Politics and U Ne Win*, p. 275

⁶⁴ (a) Kyaw Win: *The Thaw on Myanmar Politics*, p. 519

(b) U Khin Nyunt: *My Life*, pp. 530/612-614

⁶⁵ Myint Thu: *Autobiography of General Soe Win*, p.399

organizations such as the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), the Rice Millers' and Merchants' Association (RMMA), the Association of Fishery Product Traders (AFPT), the Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), and the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA). Like many organizations under the BSPP, SPDC aided Government-organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GO NGOs) became tools of the ruling government to control society. For instance, USDA was used to mobilize supporters and to monitor the opponents of the military regime.⁶⁶ It was largely accused for the Debayin incident.

But local NGOs and International NGOs have more space from the mid-1990s since the Tatmadaw government or SPDC allowed those INGOS in the name of "social development" of Myanmar.⁶⁷ As usual, students and *sangha* (monks) were suspiciously watched. Many universities were moved out to suburban area due to development plans. Ministry of Religious Affairs asked for monks to register identification cards.⁶⁸ Under the Tatmadaw government, the normal as well as legal institutions were abolished. Then, the politicized and immediate policy replaced the law without any legislative discussions. In fact such policies were the product of personalized power of the leader, and could be changed unexpectedly by will or whim.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Kyaw Yin Hlaing: "Associational life in Myanmar: Past and Present," p. 162.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 167.

⁶⁹ Steinberg: "*Legitimacy in Burma*," p. 120.

Thus, it cannot be denied that Myanmar way to democratization had been introduced by Generals. Or it was a result of the pressure that had faced in 1988 uprising. Since Tatmadaw refused to transfer the power to the election-winning party--- which was again voted by democratically---made them crisis of legitimacy. Then, democratization or Seven-Step Roadmap was Tatmadaw's attempt to get the legitimacy, as scholars argued.

After having arguable votes such as advanced voting, Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) won majority seat in the Parliament (Hluttaw). There is no strong opposition party after the first general election. On 30 March 2011, U Thein Sein led civilian government was elected through legislature and Myanmar government has been praised for its peaceful transition and certain political openness.

There is a democratization in which a non-democratic regime started democratic systems such as elections. Myanmar had tried democratization when country was moved from colonial rule to parliamentary democracy in line with the 1947 Constitution. The democratization was, however, ended with failure and the State had been reversed under Tatmadaw led governments.

After 2010 election, despite this is arguable for its fairness, Myanmar has been shifted from the ruling SPDC to the elected civilian government under the President U Thein Sein administration. His administration came to power on 30 March 2011, in line with the 2008 Constitution. This, time and again, can be called democratization since the government has been at least elected by means of democratic culture. It was a move from non-democratic regime.

Naturally, the country has been worrying for this second time attempt to democracy. People have observed cautiously 2010 multiparty general elections and the transfer of power to elected government because of 1990 elections process. Nearly fifty years later, democracy is reintroduced. Thus, it is natural phenomena that people are worried. People had had experience in fear from failure of the democratization including the low trust to the successive Tatmadaw governments for more than fifty years.

If the theory is applied to the case of so-called new Myanmar, it is weak to define even to a first step. Myanmar used to be called a non-democratic one before March 2011. On 7 November 2010, there was an “election” in which people “fully” participated. There came out “check-and-balance” in the government system. Therefore, it is true in theory that non-democratic Myanmar is introduced by democracy. At least, it follows part of theory. But what the missing parts or the true sense of democracy are somewhat debatable. Arguable factors are strongly existed in the case of Myanmar.

Moreover, Myanmar democratization itself does not come as clear as the theory says. Then, it can be said that it is partially to meet for a first step, according to the discussed theory. Scholars have argued that only a procedural democracy can be stated into Myanmar democracy. According to scholar Thomas Carothers, there is

political openness and certain economic reforms in Myanmar, as it may be called “defensive liberalization”, but early to say about democratization in Myanmar.”⁷⁰

Discussing about a sustainable democracy may be far beyond for a young and early democratic nation. Scholars have argued that Myanmar democratization is not mature enough to be measured even in the transitional period. At the same time, no one can hope many things beyond elections in such kind of newly democratic nations. According to some democratization theorists, when someone looks at the number of early democratized nations, one can see more number of newly democratized countries is listed in the transitional period. There are only a small number of young democratic nations which still enjoy a positive dynamic of democratization.⁷¹ Thomas Carothers has argued that “By far the majority of third-wave countries has not achieved a relatively well-functioning democracy or do not seem to be deepening or advancing whatever democratic progress they have made.”⁷² Moreover, there are many countries which lie in the ‘gray zone’ which is just between liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes.⁷³ Therefore, it is fair to say that Myanmar democracy is in the gray zone, and have not yet completed its first step of democratization.

⁷⁰ Thomas Carothers: “Is Burma Democratizing?” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, April 2, 2012. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/02/is-burma-democratizaing/app62j> (accessed 23 January 214) (Hereafter, this work will be referred to as Carothers: “*Is Burma Democratizaing.*”)

⁷¹ Croissant : “*Introduction: Democratization*,” p.2

⁷² Carothers: “*The End of the Transition Paradigm*,” p. 9

⁷³ Croissant : “*Introduction: Democratization*,” p. 9

Perhaps, Myanmar case can be probably simplified as an elite-conceded democratization--the democratization which comes from above--which has a slim chance of success in the history of democratization. Scholars argue that Myanmar democratization is just a change led by a certain ruling group because of the concern of legitimacy of SLORC which was led by Tatmadaw. It is a good fake design which makes to woo the public who eager to see certain liberalization.⁷⁴ It is different from the mass-pressured democratization which gains more chances to be a fully democratized country.⁷⁵

Once, there was Burmese [Myanmar] Way to Socialism. It drew attention and caused confusion especially regarding with its doctrine.⁷⁶ It was no longer valid since BSPP was abolished. After that, Myanmar had been introduced Seven-Step Road Map for democracy which was crafted by Tatmadaw Generals. It is also Myanmar ways for democracy. Or, it is the reflection of how Tatmadaw Generals understood democratization of Myanmar. Thus, the 2008 Constitution declares the multi-party democracy which is genuine and disciplined.⁷⁷ Similarly, in confusing about Burmese Way to Socialism, scholars may puzzle what democracy is not genuine and not disciplined.

⁷⁴ Carothers: “*Is Burma democratizing ?*”

⁷⁵ Welzel: “*Theories of Democratization*” , p. 89

⁷⁶(a) The name of declared policy ‘Burmese Way to Socialism’ was contributed by Lieutenant Colonel Than Nyunt (Chicago)

(b) Party ideology Dialectical Correlation of Man and His Environment was proposed by U Chit Hlaing, Colonel Saw Myint and Colonel Saw Oo.

(c) Ko Ko Maung Gyi: *Tha Yan Yaw Akher Myar*, pp.740 and 740-750

⁷⁷ Article 7 , Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Nay Pyi Taw, Ministry of Information, September, 2008

CHAPTER V

Internal and External Factors of Myanmar Democratization

The previous chapter explained about the Myanmar way of democratic transition. In fact, the democratization process was initiated and implemented by the Tatmadaw (Military) Government but there were some internal and external factors to assist the Myanmar democratic transition smoothly and peacefully.

According to Professor Huntington (1991), there are three factors seem to hasten the military's decision to withdraw from power: (i) the cooperation of the opposition in the timing and mode of transition, (ii) a guarantee that there will be no prosecution of military officers for acts they committed while they were in power, and (iii) guarantees about the preservation of the autonomy and role of the military. Therefore, this chapter will do analysis how the internal and external factors assisted or motivated Myanmar's democratic transition and also how these all factors were coincidence at the right time and right place.

5.1. Myanmar- China Relations

The relations between Myanmar and China have establishment since Myanmar regained her independence in 1948. According to Myanmar's judgment, China always pays attention to Myanmar because of her security concern and the latter

stands high in the degree of importance China attaches to its peripheral areas.⁷⁸ In fact, Sino- Myanmar relationship was based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence since 1954. In addition, this relationship was built not only five principles of peaceful co-existence but also exchanged visit of leaders of both countries for instance, H.E. Mr. Zhou Enlai, the first Premier of the People's Republic of China visited Myanmar in June 1954 and U Nu, Prime Minister of Myanmar visited China in November 1954. The Sino- Myanmar relations have been unstable even though the relationship built on the peaceful coexistence since the establishment of formal relationship in 1950.

5.1.1 Building a Paukphaw Relationship (1948-67)

In Myanmar language, *paukphaw* means “fraternal” or “kinsfolk.” Historically, this is how China and Myanmar have referred to their relationship⁷⁹. The first priority of the Union Government in the first five years of Independence was the integration of the country and maintained the regime survival even though Myanmar was faced ethnicity issues and the communist problems. The invasion of the conquered Chinese Nationalist (Kuomintang) forces into the Shan State in December 1949 and their consequence formation of dominance as situated areas for CIA-backed irruption and also Chinese troops participated into the Korea war which threatened the security of the country. Therefore, the relationship between two countries was based on

⁷⁸Tin Maung Maung Than, Myanmar-China Special relationship, South East Asia Affairs 2009, pg 189-210, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27913234>

⁷⁹<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/status-quo-revisited-evolving-ties-china-myanmar/>

assuring if the China made the negative activities, there would be no excuses. According to Myanmar Prime Minister U Nu, Myanmar held her position of neutrality to the US and Russia while building the good relationship with the Premier of China and trying to fix the border problem with China.⁸⁰ Thus a cordial relationship known as *paukphaw* relationship was established between the two countries in the mid-1950s on the strength of personal rapport between U Nu and Chinese premier Zhou Enlai.⁸¹

Even though there was an establishment of the *paukphaw* relationship between the Myanmar and China, the Prime Minister U Nu's worried about the China interference in the Myanmar's affairs. During his trip to Chongqing, China, as a member of a nine-member friendship delegation in December 1939, U Nu asked Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Ch'ung-hui about China's position on Myanmar and expressed his fear of Chinese intervention or interference in Myanmar.⁸² Prime Minister U Nu was aware that the Chinese military entered into Myanmar and abandoned the labours, which passed through the Burma Road.⁸³ About 15 years later, as Prime Minister of the Government of the Union of Burma, after his state visit to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in November 1954, U Nu wrote an article in which he explained the fear among the Myanmar people of (Communist) China's invasion of

⁸⁰Tin Maung Maung Than, *ibid*

⁸¹ Tin Maung Maung Than, *ibid*

⁸²Maung Aung Myoe, *logic of Myanmar China Policy* pg 2, Asian Journal of Comparative Politics.

⁸³U Nu (2015) *Gandalarit*. Yangon: NDSP, pp.45–47. (The first edition was published in 1940 by Nagani Press.)

or intervention in Myanmar and “destroying Myanmar’s independence” by making excuse of the presence of Kuomintang (KMT) troops on Myanmar soil.⁸⁴

General Ne Win transferred the power from U Nu and established the Revolutionary Council in March 1962. General Ne Win maintained the good relationship between Myanmar and China. There were a lot of state visit programs of leaders from both countries till 1967.⁸⁵ The Myanmar and China concluded the Sino-Myanmar boundary agreement and the treaty of friendship and mutual non-aggression. In fact, General Ne Win was also aware that China had the plan to interfere the Myanmar internals’ affairs. Therefore, the government maintained the friendly relationship between two countries in order to resolve the issues of aboveground leftist organizations and communist insurgency within the country. The Revolutionary Council government reduced the domestic policy in order to prevent the Chinese’s influence in the public and private business in Myanmar. At the same time, the Revolutionary Council government practiced the neutralist non-aligned foreign policy. In order to adjust the balance relation between the major powers, General Ne Win paid visit to the Soviet Union in September 1965 and the United States in September 1966. At the same time, China urged the Revolutionary Council government to support the Chinese policy to the Viet Nam War but Myanmar government maintained the non-aligned it’s policy. Consequently, China

⁸⁴Prime Minister U Nu and etal.(1955) GandalarithHmut-Tan.Yangon: Burma Translation Society, pp.3–4.

⁸⁵Robert A. Holmes, "Burma's Foreign Policy toward China since 1962", *Pacific Affairs* 45, no. 2 (Summer 1972): 242.

had decided to export revolution to Myanmar and to openly support the Burma Communist Party (BCP) insurgency on the basis of strengthening party-to-party relations over state-to-state relations.⁸⁶ China resumed the dual-track diplomacy to rebuild the friendly relationship between Myanmar and China in 1970s. Meanwhile, Myanmar government also kept the good relations with the major powers according to the Myanmar foreign policy.

In the late 1979s, China restarted the Official development assistance (ODA) to Myanmar by providing US\$ 64 million for the technical assistance projects. China provided the ODA from 1984-1987 totally US\$ 15 million and 80 million Yuan. Bilateral relations steadily improved during the second half of the 1980s until the upheaval of 1988 that ended the BSPP era in Myanmar⁸⁷.

5.1.2 The State Law and Order Restoration Council / State Peace and Development Council Period

The Tatmadaw Government (Military Government), the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), retained the power on 18th September 1988. It later changed to the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on 15 November 1997, which started the military regime until a new Constitutional Government was established on 31 March 2011.

⁸⁶ Mg Aung Myoe, Logic of Myanmar China's policy, Asian Journal of Comparative Politics, 1-16, 2016

⁸⁷ Tin Maung Maung Than, Myanmar-China Special relationship, South East Asia Affairs 2009, pg 189-210, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27913234>

After the SLORC held the power, it renewed its independent and active foreign policy. During the military regime, the United States and Western Countries imposed sanctions on Myanmar. China was strong supporter and very close friend of Myanmar. Due to the many sanctions on Myanmar, the Tatmadaw Government restarted the *Paukphaw* relationship with the China in order to get the mutual benefit. However, the Tatmadaw Government was also aware the China's influences in the internal affairs and tried to maintain the neutrality.⁸⁸ These relationships were more than *Paukphaw* relationship and there were a lot of security and economic cooperation between two countries probably China tried to avoid by interfering Myanmar affairs. There was a remarkable bilateral relationship between Myanmar and China and also many high level state visits between two countries. One of the most important tests of Sino-Myanmar relations was the Chinese stand on Myanmar in the United Nations (UN). China voted against the draft resolution on Myanmar to be put on the Security Council Agenda on 15 September 2006 and vetoed another draft resolution at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on 12 January 2007.⁸⁹

The bilateral trade between Myanmar and China had grown up gradually since 1988. There was not much bilateral trade between Myanmar and China before 1988. China also provided the development assistance to Myanmar

⁸⁸Nyunt, U Khin, Hmaw Win Thar (Retired General), *My Life*, Second Printing, Yangon, Pan MyoThaYar, 2015

⁸⁹Myoe , Maung Aung ,Logic of Myanmar China's policy, Asian Journal of Comparative Politics, 1-16, 2016

while International Organizations and donors stopped all their development assistance to Myanmar because of the United States and Western Countries imposed the sanctions on Myanmar. Between 1966 and 2000, Myanmar received loans equivalent to US\$ 138.7 million from China for the implementation of projects.⁹⁰ According to the Myanmar Government, between 1989 and 2006, the Chinese Government provided over Yuan 2.15 billion and US\$ 400 million in various forms of loans.⁹¹

The China had supported Myanmar at the International forums in order to do its influence on Myanmar. The Tatmadaw Government was full attention on this matter and on the other side; the Government had tried to keep its independent and non-aligned policy in foreign affairs. Therefore, the Tatmadaw Government had enhanced its diplomatic relations with other countries especially with Russia and India as well as with regional institutions such as ASEAN and BISTEC in order to become independence from China.

In fact, China had the intention to Myanmar to become peace and stable country because of China's benefit. However, China's view was totally different with the United States and Western countries. China trusts that the Tatmadaw Government had the capability to build peaceful and stability in the conflict post-independence Myanmar. China also has the opinion that the situation

⁹⁰Myanmar received loans equivalent of US\$ 1889 million from Japan in the period between 1970 and 2000 and loans equivalent of US\$ 365.6 million from West Germany in the period between 1970 and 1987.

⁹¹Myoe, Maung Aung, Sino- Myanmar Economic Relations Since 1988 , Asia Research Institute Working Paper Series No 86, April 2007, www.ari.nus.edu.sg/pub/wps.htm.

of Myanmar will be worse if China support the US and Western's sanction on Myanmar and later it will affect the China as the neighboring country. (Chenyang and Fook 2009). Therefore, China prefers to engage the military leaders in Myanmar, and in so doing, China always emphasizes the five principles of "mutual respect, mutual non-aggression, non- interference, mutual equality, and peaceful coexistence" based on the understanding of the high nationalism and xenophobia among many of the Myanmar leaders (T. M. M. Than, 2003) (Chenyang and Fook 2009). This approach has proven to be successful in building the trust of the regime to China as can be seen, for instance, in China's advice to the regime to accept USAid after the Nargis as well as China's mediatory role in the talks between US and Myanmar after the Saffron revolution (Chenyang and Fook 2009).⁹²

5.2. The Role of ASEAN in Myanmar's Democratic Transition

ASEAN was established in 1967, since then ASEAN welcomed Myanmar to become the member of ASEAN. At this time, Myanmar had not joined the ASEAN in order to maintain its neutralist non-align foreign policy during the cold war period. After Tatmadaw Government retained the power in 1988, the government practiced the independent and active policy. Therefore, Myanmar would like to actively participate in the regional and international arena.

During Senior General Than Shwe visit to China in January 1996, Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of SLORC, informed his counterpart of

⁹²Understanding the Myanmar Reform: Linking internal and external factors by Sukmawani Bela Pertiwi

Myanmar's intention to join ASEAN.⁹³ In his speech, he explained: -

“The structure of the international relations in the world today has changed. In view of ever improving contacts among nations it would not be possible for individual nations to stay aloof. They have to work for regional cooperation to secure regional stability and progress. Myanmar, like the People's Republic of China, has placed emphasis on its relations with nations in the region and at the same time it gives priority to cooperation with ASEAN nations.”⁹⁴

When Myanmar expressed her willingness to join the Association of South East Asia Nations, the United States and European Union disagreed to Myanmar to become a member of ASEAN. Therefore, the United State and European Union showed their consent in the ASEM Meeting as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. However, the founder of ASEAN Member States i.e. Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore supported the Myanmar's desire to join the ASEAN. Some member countries thought that Myanmar's geography could contribute to the economy of ASEAN. Myanmar was invited as the guest of ASEAN Chairman to attend the ASEAN Summit in 1995 and 1996 respectively. Later, Myanmar became the member of ASEAN in 1997.

During this time, Myanmar had been isolated from the world due to the sanctions on Myanmar. Therefore, the founder of ASEAN Member States thought that ASEAN should pursue constructive engagement to Myanmar even though the United

⁹³ The logic of Myanmar's China Policy by Maung Aung Myoe, Asian Journal of Comparative Politics, pg 1.16

⁹⁴New Light of Myanmar Newspaper (11 January 1996)—this is part of the speech reported in daily newspaper published on 11 January 1996.

States and European Union imposed the sanctions and made the isolation in the international arena. At the other side, ASEAN worried that China took the advantages and over influence on Myanmar. The other important factor is that the rich of natural resources, the importance of political geography characteristic i.e. situated between China and India and economic interest.

ASEAN constructive engagement was initiative by Thailand in 1991 during the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting. ASEAN's "*constructive engagement*" policy toward Myanmar is implemented chiefly on two levels, namely, the multilateral level of regional organizations and the bilateral level of relations between the ASEAN Member States.⁹⁵ The approval of Myanmar to become member of states was the first step of the constructive engagement. ASEAN viewed that Myanmar would fulfill the duties and responsibilities as a member, solve the problems and transform the political transition in the country after becoming the Member State of ASEAN.

Myanmar has actively contributed in the ASEAN action plans, ASEAN Community Building and signed the series of agreement and treaties since 1997. Apart from this, Myanmar also got the economic benefit by entering the Free Trade Agreement among ASEAN and its External Partner i.e. Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand. Myanmar also has a lot of economic interest through ASEAN. The Member States of ASEAN like Indonesia, Malaysian Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam are doing business in Myanmar. Among them, Singapore is top investor and the Thailand is the third investor in Myanmar. According to IMF statistics, from 2000 to

⁹⁵ ASEAN Constructive Engagement towards Myanmar by Fan Hongwai , China International Studies March/ April 2012

2010, Myanmar's export to ASEAN countries amounted to 43.7% of its total volume of foreign trade, and import 45.7%. From 2001 to 2010, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia had been the leading trading partners of Myanmar, with Thailand being Myanmar's largest export destination and Singapore (from 2001 to 2004) and Thailand (from 2005 to 2010) being Myanmar's second largest source of import.(Fan Hongwai 2012)

After Myanmar joined the ASEAN, ASEAN could enhance the constructive engagement to Myanmar to transforming democratic nation. Myanmar also viewed that constructive engagement was needed to enhancing the investment in the country in order to reach the target. According to Myanmar Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw, constructive engagement meant that "ASEAN would see Myanmar as an equal" (Kraft 2000). Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, particularly a strong proponent of Myanmar's inclusion in ASEAN, viewed membership as a way of "hav[ing] a very positive effect on them", exposing them to "how Malaysia manages its free market and its system of democracy," which would make them less "afraid of the democratic process" and "overtime, they will tend to give more voice to the people.[...] [T]hey become a member first, then put their house in order" (*The Irrawaddy*1997). Mahathir argued that foreign investment and economic development would change the generals' "attitude and perception" regarding democratic transformation (*Burma Today* 2002). Indonesia, under President Suharto, largely shared Malaysia's view in this regard. Not all ASEAN members were as supportive of Myanmar's admission as Malaysia, which together with Singapore had pushed

domestic firms to invest in Myanmar in the hope that “ASEAN capital would lift the country up”(Jones2008:274).

In order to persuade Myanmar’s transformation effectively, ASEAN viewed that they need to replace non-interfere principles with *flexible engagement* which was initiated by Thailand Foreign Minister Dr. Surin Pitsuwan. However, this initiative was not successful due to lack of consensus among the member states. Instead of flexible engagement, “enhancing interaction” was laid down. This means that the ASEAN countries could “openly criticize” and put pressure on Myanmar for its domestic problems such as democracy and human rights, but such criticism was only an expression of the stand of the individual countries but not that of ASEAN. (Fan Hongwai 2012)After the Depayin incident, ASEAN gave the pressure on the Myanmar Government to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of National League for Democracy and other politicians and transform to democratic nation. In this case, ASEAN’s main doctrine is the non-interfere of internal affairs of the Member States except Myanmar. At the same time, the United States and European reminded ASEAN to give pressure on Myanmar because of human rights violation and democratic transition. ASEAN agreed to put the wording in the ASEAN statements regarding the situation in Myanmar even though ASEAN practiced the consensus among the Member States. However, ASEAN used the persuasion ways despite of condemnation and imposition sanctions on Myanmar. Therefore, Myanmar laid down the Seven-Step Road Map to transform to the flourishing discipline democratic nation in 2003.

The United States and EU threatened to boycott ASEAN meetings precisely because of the situation in Myanmar. Therefore, Myanmar can potentially cause more harm to ASEAN than any other Member State.⁹⁶ Myanmar relinquished the ASEAN Chair in 2006 due to the United States and EU constantly gave pressure to ASEAN.

After the Saffron Revolution happened in 2007, ASEAN expressed a strong and condemned viewed on this incident and urged Myanmar to make the political transition. ASEAN also urged Myanmar to accept mediation offered by the UN, to release political detainees and to maintain “peaceful transition to democracy” (Haacke 2008). ASEAN also tried to persuade Myanmar Leaders to receive the international assistance during the Cyclone Nargis in 2008. ASEAN formed the tripartite core group (TCG) by comprising the United Nations, ASEAN and Myanmar for the recovery of Cyclone Nargis affected area. In this year, Myanmar adopted the Constitution by ad referendum.

ASEAN has encouraged Myanmar to transform Democratic Nation by the constructive engagement. As a result, Myanmar held the free and fair election in 2010. Myanmar’s general election in November 2010 was widely criticized by Western countries for failing to meet their standards and requirements. Though it also fell short of the requirements of ASEAN, ASEAN acknowledged such change was

⁹⁶Beyond Non-Interference in ASEAN: The Association's Role in Myanmar's National Reconciliation and Democratization by Ruukun Katanyuu, Asian Survey, Vol.46, No.6 (November/December2006), pp. 825-845

positive, and kept on encouraging Myanmar and expressed its support to Myanmar's steady progress and political development since the general election as well as the new parliament and government formed in line with the Seven-Step Roadmap. (Fan Hongwei 2012). ASEAN's constructive engagement to Myanmar is really effective on Myanmar's transition.

ASEAN conferred the Chair of ASEAN to Myanmar in 2014 in order to acknowledge the Myanmar's democratic transition at the 19th ASEAN Summit which was held in Bali. If ASEAN made hard line approach to Myanmar, Myanmar would be closer tied with China or hard to change the transition from the authoritarian to democratization.

5.3 The United States

The relations between Myanmar and the United States became worse after the 1988 Military Coup in Myanmar⁹⁷. Before 1988 incidents, there were a lot of cooperation between Myanmar and the United States. The United States also provided US\$ 346.7 million for the economic assistance in 1946 and in 2007. It also provided US\$ 94.4 million for military assistance. The United States provided an extensive international military education and training (IMET) in Myanmar from 1950 till 1962 and the 972 officers attended the training in the United States. According to the data, there were 1852 officers to train overseas among them 1,227 officers (66.3 per cent)

⁹⁷https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myanmar%E2%80%93United_States_relations

who were trained in the United States under the Parliamentary Government.⁹⁸ According to the 1978 International Security Act, Myanmar might not get the training of IMET programme but Myanmar had got the exemption in this case. The reason was that this training could not help the improvement of human rights but it conducted the standard. During the Revolutionary Council (1958-60), there was cooperation between Myanmar Military and CIA to give the training of counter Communists in Myanmar.

After Tatmadaw government retained the power in 1988, the United States started to change their relationship with Myanmar. The National League for Democracy won the landslide victory in the 1990 Election but the Tatmadaw Government had not transferred the power to the winning party. Therefore, the United States Government stopped to support their economic aid program to Myanmar except humanitarian assistance and also ended other assistance program to Myanmar. This was the first sanction on Myanmar.

The second sanction was imposed on Myanmar in 1997 by forbidding visa to Myanmar Military Generals and their family and asking the American businessmen not to do business in Myanmar.

The third sanction was imposed on Myanmar in 2003 after Depayin incident happened. On 29 July 2003, President George W. Bush signed into law the “Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act,” a much stronger set of economic sanctions than the non-retroactive ban on American investment passed by President Bill Clinton

⁹⁸These figures are from Maung Aung Myoe, *Building the Tatmadaw: Myanmar armed forces since 1948* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009)

in 1997.⁹⁹The 2003 sanctions comprise four main components: an extension of the visa ban on officials of the SPDC and the USDA; a freeze on the U.S. assets of Burmese officials; a ban on financial transactions between American parties and “entities of the Rangoon regime” (save for those that receive special exemptions from the U.S. Treasury Department, such as non-governmental organizations [NGOs] working on humanitarian projects); and, most important, an embargo on all imports from Burma to the United States.¹⁰⁰All Burmese imports into the US were stopped—including textile imports, which had amounted to some US\$ 356 million annually, though the law was shortly afterwards amended to allow the import of educational materials, art and handicrafts. Diplomatic relations, however, continued, although the representation by both sides was reduced over time to the Charge’ d’ Affaires level.¹⁰¹

The fourth sanction was imposed on Myanmar after the saffron revolution in 2007. President Bush extended the 1997 sanctions and renewed the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003. The fourth sanction included the banned of Myanmar Jade and Ruby to import to US and prohibited the American investment in Myanmar. Also, US executive orders prohibited any US citizen from aiding third party foreign investment in Myanmar or purchasing shares in a third country business if its products were primarily for Myanmar, and required US representatives to

⁹⁹ Burma and U.S. Sanction Punishing an Authoritarian Regime by Donald M. Seekins, *Asian Survey*, Vol 45, No.3 (May/ June 2005) pg 437-452

¹⁰⁰ . “U.S. Imposes Financial Services Freeze on Burmese Regime: Order Also Prohibits Importation of Burmese Products,” U.S. Department of State, Washington File, July 29, 2003, [http:// usinfo.state.gov](http://usinfo.state.gov) .

¹⁰¹Steinberg, David I, *The United States and Myanmar: a ‘boutique issue’?*
International Affairs **86**:1(2010)175–194

vote against any multilateral financial assistance for which Myanmar was to be the recipient.¹⁰² President Bush continued the sanctions on Myanmar but this sanctions policy were not reached its goal and Myanmar Military regimes was still ongoing. Therefore, the members of administration suggested President Bush to appoint the Ambassador to Myanmar to discuss the policy of Myanmar. In the waning days of the Bush administration in autumn 2008, the administration nominated an ambassadorial-level appointment to coordinate Burma policy (as stipulated in the 2008 sanctions legislation) in the 2008 sanctions legislation), but he could not be confirmed before the Obama administration came into power.¹⁰³ In fact, United States' sanctions on Myanmar were not effective to change the Myanmar Political transition and at the other side, China and ASEAN took the advantages by making the constructed engagement with Myanmar. Even though United States pushed the pressure to ASEAN not to allow Myanmar to become the Member of ASEAN in 1997 but it was also unsuccessful. However, Myanmar people were suffered by United States' sanctions because of unemployment and economic slowdown. Myanmar economy relied on the textile factory and imported to the United States but import ban of Myanmar 2003's sanctions was directly effective to Myanmar people and not to the Tatmadaw Government. After President Obama's administration transferred the power in 2009, the United States made the new rapprochement to Myanmar by laying down the "pragmatic engagement"

¹⁰²Burma and U.S. Sanction Punishing an Authoritarian Regime by Donald M. Seekins, *Asian Survey*, Vol 45, No.3 (May/ June 2005) pg 437-452

¹⁰³Steinberg, David I. "The United States and Myanmar: A 'Boutique Issue'?" *International Affairs* 86:1, 2010: 175-194.

policy. However, the sanctions were still imposed on Myanmar. As Pricilla Clapp has noted, this change is the result of tough debate within the United States about the efficacy of sanction and increasing voices to balance the sanction with 'engagement' (Clapp 2010).¹⁰⁴ After laid down this policy, the Assistant Secretary of States for Asia and Pacific Affairs with US Ambassador to ASEAN visited to Myanmar. During their stays in Myanmar, they met the Prime Minister and National League for Democracy Party Leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other minority as well. This trip was important and the Tatmadaw Government explained their plans for preparation of the 2010 multiparty election with the participation of various parties towards the discipline flourishing democratic nation in accordance with the 2008 Constitution. The President Obama's policy of engagement to Myanmar was really effective. As a result, the new quasi-civilian government transferred the power from the State Peace and Development Council on 31 March 2011.

5.4 The role of Civil Society Organizations

As always, some political scientists look at with doubtful eyes into Myanmar case of democratization, regarding the civil society approach. Basically, this European concept of 'civil society' is also debatable in Myanmar. Not all of them are agreed on the case of Myanmar whether it has strong civil society in the Western

¹⁰⁴Clapp, Pricilla. "Prospects for Rapprochement Between the United States and Myanmar." *Contemporary Southeast Asia Vol. 32, No. 3*, 2010: 409–426.

concept or not.¹⁰⁵ For Myanmar, civil society can be defined narrowly as non-governmental organizations, or more widely to any voluntary association, formal or informal which exists between the level of the family and the level of the state.

According to scholar Tocqueville, civil society is an independent force that exists between the government and the family, and it denotes voluntary associations and networks. This includes from community-based organizations, media and social welfare organizations, as well as religious and cultural groups. Some political parties may be included as long as they do not seek state power.¹⁰⁶ U Htun Aung Kyaw, the activist and the founder of Civil Society for Burma organization, defines “Civil society in the western sense has no equivalent in the Burmese lexicon.”¹⁰⁷ Ashley South also notes: “The notion of civil society is of course rooted in European and the U.S. political thought, making its application to non-Western contexts as Burma potentially problematic.”¹⁰⁸ However, Ashley South has denied all the skeptic arguments of whether Myanmar has far from civil society. He argues that it is clearly enough to see a potential of Myanmar civil society.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Ashley South: *Civil Society in Burma: The Development of Democracy amidst Conflict*, Washington, East-West Center, 2008, p. 12. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Ashley South: *Civil Society in Burma*)

¹⁰⁶The term in this paper will be used mostly from de Tocqueville definition.

¹⁰⁷Monique Skidmore: “Introduction,” in Monique Skidmore, ed. , *Burma at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2005, p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ Ashley South: *Civil Society in Burma*, 12

¹⁰⁹ Ashley South: “Political Transition in Myanmar: A New Model for Democratization,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, Vol. 26, No. 2, August 2004, p. 4. (Hereafter this work will be referred to as Ashley South: “*Political Transition in Myanmar*”)

No matter the definition have different arguments, civil society is necessary for Myanmar political culture, at least. It is mentioned that Myanmar has only two classes the ruling and the ruled.¹¹⁰ Middle class is missing. Therefore, it is necessary to have another mid layer to be more pluralistic or to bargain political space (soft power) ---that is ‘civil society.’

What an ironical look here for Myanmar is that the civil institutions and social activists groups in the western sense are basically occurred out in ‘insurgent controlled areas’. Besides, most groups are running in the hands of ethnic people which are sponsored by international donors. However, the significance of international donors and organizations is more prominent for ethnic minorities’ areas than the central Myanmar or known as Dry Zone where traditional pattern of community participation is prominent.¹¹¹

Under SLORC which came into power by cracking down on the 1988 uprising of Myanmar, there are many overseas organizations formed by Myanmar people who fled because of political repression. Namely, there are National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB), the National Council of Union of Burma (NCUB), the All Burma Students’ Democratic Front (ABSDF), the Free Burma Coalition (FBC), the Burma Strategic Group (BSG), the NLD LA (Liberated Area or NLD-LA), the All Burma Federation of Students Unions (ABFSU), the Association to Assist Political Prisoners (AAPP), the Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB),

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p.106

¹¹¹ Ashley South: *“Political Transition in Myanmar”*

Federation of Trade Unions of Burma (FTUB), and the Vigorous Student Warriors.¹¹² Therefore, Myanmar Diasporas has its own civil society while country has started moving into democratic paths.

Thus, civil society had minimal chances to organize and develop their activities under the tight control of the Tatmadaw Government. Even the Free Funeral Associations, which are just organized for the basic need of people, had been suspected and interrupted. On the other hand, those civil societies were naturally allergic to make smooth relations with government because most memberships had anti-government sentiment. However, some CSOs from abroad used to condemn the activities of Tatmadaw Government and also urge the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and political detainee as well as transition to democracy. Without this Civil Society Organization Myanmar's political transition would be delayed.

5.5 The role of Leadership

There are many actors involved in the democratization in Myanmar but the domestic leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Noble Peace Laureate, Leader of the National League for Democracy Party who sacrifice her life for democracy, played the important role in the democratization in Myanmar. She is a democracy icon of Myanmar. Like her father, General Aung San who struggled for the independence of Myanmar, she fought for democracy by peaceful means. She faced many difficulties while struggling for democracy. She was under house arrest more than twenty years.

¹¹²Kyaw Yin Hlaing: "*Associational life in Myanmar: Past and Present*," p.161.

However, she used this happen as an advantage to announce the international community by means of human right violation in Myanmar. In 1990 election, the National League for Democracy won the landslide victory. Her influence to the people of Myanmar was amazing. People of Myanmar believed that she will be a good democracy leader of the country and she will bring the country's development, peace and prosperity.

After U Thein Sein's administration transferred the power from the State Peace and Development Council, U Thein Sein encouraged Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to engage in the political process through participation in the by-election 2012. She recognized the democratic transition and participated in the by-election 2012. After she participated in the political transition in Myanmar, the International Community also recognized Myanmar's political transition.

She has pledged her allegiance to the Myanmar people and a democratic Myanmar. "My party, the National League for Democracy, and I stand ready and willing to play any role in the process of national reconciliation. The potential of our country is enormous. This should be nurtured and developed to create not just a more prosperous but also a more harmonious, democratic society where our people can live in peace, security and freedom".¹¹³ Therefore, the legitimacy of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to the people of Myanmar is incredible. Myanmar political

¹¹³Noble Lecture by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi , 16 June 2012,
http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1991/kyi-lecture_en.html

transition to democracy was peacefully because of her non-violence, patience and peaceful manners.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

No matter what it is, it cannot be denied that Myanmar democratization is not introduced by a single variable. Among them, it is going to introduce two main variables in the time of an early stage of this newly democratic state—the first one is the government which is used to say Tatmadaw Government or a new champion of democracy which brings a peaceful model of democratic transition from military to democracy, namely top-down approach. Or, it can be said it is an elite level democratization. Another variables are so called down-up approach which is loudly used in such a newly and emerging democratic country or it is a ‘key lever’ which can make Myanmar democracy to be a sustainable one. These include many factors and benefit.

Without the engagement policies from the major power countries like the United States, China and ASEAN, Myanmar transition would take a longer time. It is quite obvious that various approaches taken by major powers, including the United States, China and ASEAN, accelerated Myanmar’s democratic transition. Even though these major powers had various interest and approaches, their engagement and support would help Myanmar’s democratization process.

It was also imperative that internal factors like the role of the civil society organization, both domestic and abroad, and the role of the democratic leader or people leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi played an important role in the Myanmar Democratization transition process.

It was quite evident that major powers like the United States and China competed their power as well as their interest in Myanmar and their strategies were effective and instrumental to the process of Myanmar's democratic transition. ASEAN also made the constructive engagement with the Tatmadaw Government. Instead of condemning and criticizing, ASEAN always tried to persuade and support the Myanmar's democratization process. ASEAN is not only support but also make the friendly relation with Myanmar. They have made the engagement with the Tatmadaw Government and also encouraged to change the democratization.

In the process of democratization of Myanmar, the roles of domestic leaders are very important. They are main actors in the democratization process in Myanmar. Above all, democracy icon, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, plays a pivotal role and the main actor of Myanmar's democratization process. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi introduced the democratic values to the people of Myanmar and sacrificed her life, even in her house arrests, entirely toward Myanmar's democratic transition.

In the democratization of Myanmar, the civil society also played an important role in the democratization of Myanmar. The civil societies from abroad have supported and urged the democratic transition of Myanmar. Their activities are very limited within the country due to the Tatmadaw Government's rigid principles but they could urge and help the Myanmar politicians and provide the funding as well.

It can be arguable that if a majority of people want a change in leaders and policies and are able to organize effectively within the rule, they can get change (Larry Diamond, 2008). The people of Myanmar vividly expressed their aspirations

and desire to change towards democracy. It was also apparent that the civil societies played a vital role in checking and limiting the potential abuse of state power and thus sustains and enriches democracy.

It is also worthwhile to recall what Larry Diamond inspired that there are no preconditions for democracy, other than the willingness on the part of a nation's elite to attempt to govern by democratic means. The trust and confidence, which has incrementally been built between the Tatmadaw Government and the political elites or opposition parties, also played a constructive role in persuading the Tatmadaw Government to move towards democratic transition.

In conclusion, Myanmar is now on the right track to the democratic consolidation country. There are many types of democratization process in the world but Myanmar's democratization can be portrayed as a "Myanmar model" as it has performed a smooth transition to democracy.

No one can deny the fact that Myanmar democratization was initiated by the Tatmadaw Government but there are also many variables, which assisted considerably to or accelerated the democratization process in Myanmar. If there were no support and engagement from the major powers, ASEAN, civil society organizations and the people, it would not materialize the democratization in Myanmar. In other words, it would take a great deal of time to become a democratic nation.

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국문요약

흔히 버마로도 알려져 있는 미얀마는 2011 년부터 민주국가로 전환되었다. 미얀마의 정치적 전환은 하향식 엘리트 모델이지만 다양한 내부적, 외부적 요인들이 미얀마의 정치적 변화에 기여하였으며, 권위주의 정권에서 민주화 국가로의 전환은 매우 평화적인 과정을 거쳤다. 따라서 본 논문은 군부 정권이 평화적인 방법으로 변화를 이끌어 낸 이유를 집중 조명할 것이다. 본 연구는 크게 두 부분으로 이루어진다. 우선 미얀마의 민주화 방식에 대해 설명할 것이다. 미얀마는 1988 년 군부 정권이 정부를 장악한 이후 국제 사회에서 고립되었다. 또한 인권 문제와 정치적 갈등으로 인해 미국, 유럽연합 그리고 다른 서구 국가들에게 강력한 제재를 받기도 하였다. 그러나 2010 년 5 월에 열린 총 선거에서 통합단결발전당(USDP=**Union Solidarity and Development Party**)이 승리를 거두면서 극적인 정치적 변화가 일어났고, 2011 년 3 월 31 일 군부 정권은 권력을 당선당에게 이양하였다. 사실 미얀마의 민주화 과정은 동남아시아를 포함한 아시아에서는 새로운 형태의 민주화 과정을 거쳤다. 군부 정권은 2003 년 7 단계 로드맵을 제시하여 민주주의 국가로 변형하는 가도를 마련하였고, 국민에 의해 당선된 당에게 권력을 넘기는 형태의 민주화 과정을 보여준다. 두 번째 부분은 미얀마의 민주화 과정을 도운 내부적, 외부적 요인을 집중 조명할 것이다. 민주화 과정은 군부 정권 엘리트에 의해서 이루어졌으나 국제 사회가 큰 영향력을 끼친 것이 사실이다. 미국과 서구 국가들의 제재에도 불구하고 중국은 미얀마와의 친선 관계를 유지하였으며 ASEAN 도 미얀마를 설득하고 민주 국가를 건설하는 것을 장려하였다. 미국의 실용적 관여도 민주국가로의 이양에 큰 영향을 미쳤으며, 시민사회와 민주지도자 아웅산 수치 여사 역시 미얀마의 민주화 과정에 결정적인 역할을 하였다. 이 모든 요인들이 미얀마 군부 정권이 민주적으로 권력을 이양하는데 큰 영향을 미쳤으며, 현재 미얀마는 민주국가를 공고화하는 길에 서있다.

주요어: 민주국가, 군부 정권, 7 단계 로드맵, 내부 요인, 외부 요인, 하향식 엘리트 모델, 실용적 관여

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